



MEMORANDUM

TO: Board of Park Commissioners
FROM: Pamela Kliment, Neighborhood Matching Fund Planner
DATE: August 1, 2005
SUBJECT: Dahl Skatespot

Requested Board Action

A public hearing and Parks staff briefing on the skatespot proposal at Dahl Playfield will be held on August 11th. On August 25th, the proposal will return to the Park Board for a recommendation on whether Parks will support the addition of a skateboarding area at Dahl Playfield.

Project Description and Background

Dahl Playfield, located at 7700 25th Avenue NE in Wedgwood, currently has a small old play area, comfort station, four ballfields and an informal path that goes partway around the park (see attached aerial). It is 14.50 acres.

The project the Board is being asked to consider is the addition at Dahl of a skatespot of approximately 3,600 square feet. The project has been proposed by a group of Wedgwood skateboard supporters, Boarders for Parks. A skatespot is a small skateboard park. An example (designed by Grindline, a local skateboard park designer) is attachment 1. Boarders for Parks have suggested two possible locations at Dahl for the skatespot (attachment 4).

Parks evaluated Dahl Playfield with the locational criteria of the Skateboard Park Policy and found that it met the siting goals of the Policy: it is located within an existing park with services, has parking, is visible from the street, and is a location where the impacts of the use can be adequately mitigated.

Opposition to the project has been raised by the Friends of Dahl Playfield (FODP) organization, leading to Parks' decision to bring the skatespot project to the Board for an airing of the issues and a Board recommendation.

Issues

Compatibility with Planned Park Improvements: The compatibility of a skatespot with the Friends' sponsored park improvements is a primary issue raised by citizens. Friends of Dahl is undertaking a major Neighborhood Matching Fund (NMF) project which will redevelop the play area, add a gathering space, a bog planting area, restore the perimeter path and make ballfield improvements such as backstop replacements and dugout benches. This project has been

through a public planning process and preliminary design development is complete. Considerable community time, effort and funds have been devoted to the NMF project.

The skatespot proposal was aired at the November 2004 Parks' sponsored public meeting about the Friends' improvement project. At the time it was proposed, the FODP plan for that area of the park was in the formative stage; the specific plans for the area which include the bog and public art have been developed since the initial proposal for a skatepark.

General Skatepark Opposition: In addition to the issue of the compatibility of a skatespot with the FODP plan for the park, opponents are concerned about issues often associated in the public's view with skateboard parks: late night use, crime, loitering, trash, and adding one more activity to an already busy park. Boarders for Parks counter that the small size of this facility and the fact that the skate features will be geared to beginning and intermediate skaters will ameliorate these problems.

Design: The Parks ProView Committee has approved the design development created by Siteworkshop for the play area, ballfield and path improvements. Pam Alspaugh, Parks landscape architect, has reviewed the suggested skatespot locations in the context of the approved Dahl Playfield development project. She thinks that the addition of the skatespot, primarily for younger children, would fit in well with the larger improved nearby play area and new gathering space and that the proposed location next to the parking lot is a good one. Pam was concerned that the second proposed location, in the parking lot, might trigger circulation issues. In addition, there may be other potential spots in the park where a skatespot could be located. If the skatespot project idea is approved, it would go through a normal Parks design process and the best location could be determined. The current approved schematic design for the NMF project is attached. (attachment 3)

Public Involvement Process

There have been two parallel sets of public processes; one led by Friends of Dahl and the other by Boarders for Parks. This is a community that cares about this park and every meeting was extremely well attended. BFP conducted two public meetings in February and March to talk about the project and gauge community support. About a third of the people who came to the meetings were children. FODP held five public meetings to generate ideas and community enthusiasm. For the NMF project, Parks mailed out 2,000 fliers, and a large project sign has been displayed at the site since June 2004. In addition, because of the controversy the skatespot proposal has generated, the Wedgwood Community Council will facilitate a community meeting August 16 and will report the meeting outcome to the Board on August 25th.

Budget

If the skatespot idea is approved, Boarders for Parks will apply for a Neighborhood Matching Fund Small and Simple grant for design and for development of a cost estimate

Schedule

BFP plans to apply for the NMF Small and Simple award in October. Funding will be available in late November 2005. The rest of the schedule will depend on how soon design can be completed (with appropriate public process) and fundraising. The playfield renovation project has an approved design development plan. Construction drawings will be completed by the end of 2005, and construction is planned for summer 2006.

Additional Information

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Attachments

- 1-Typical skatespot Idea
- 2-Existing Site
- 3-Friends of Dahl Schematic Design
- 4-Potential Skatespot Locations

Attachment 1: Typical Idea (designed by Grindline)



The "Taco" is a small transitional element that can be ridden multiple ways. Skaters can skate the front of it like a small quarter pipe or use the side as a launch ramp. It is small enough that a beginning to intermediate skater won't be intimidated, but more advanced skaters can still have fun with it. This spot would require a minimum of 20 feet of pavement in front of the obstacle and another 15 behind and would be ideal with a curved path as seen in the photos.



example of skater using front as quarter pipe

example of skater using side as launch ramp

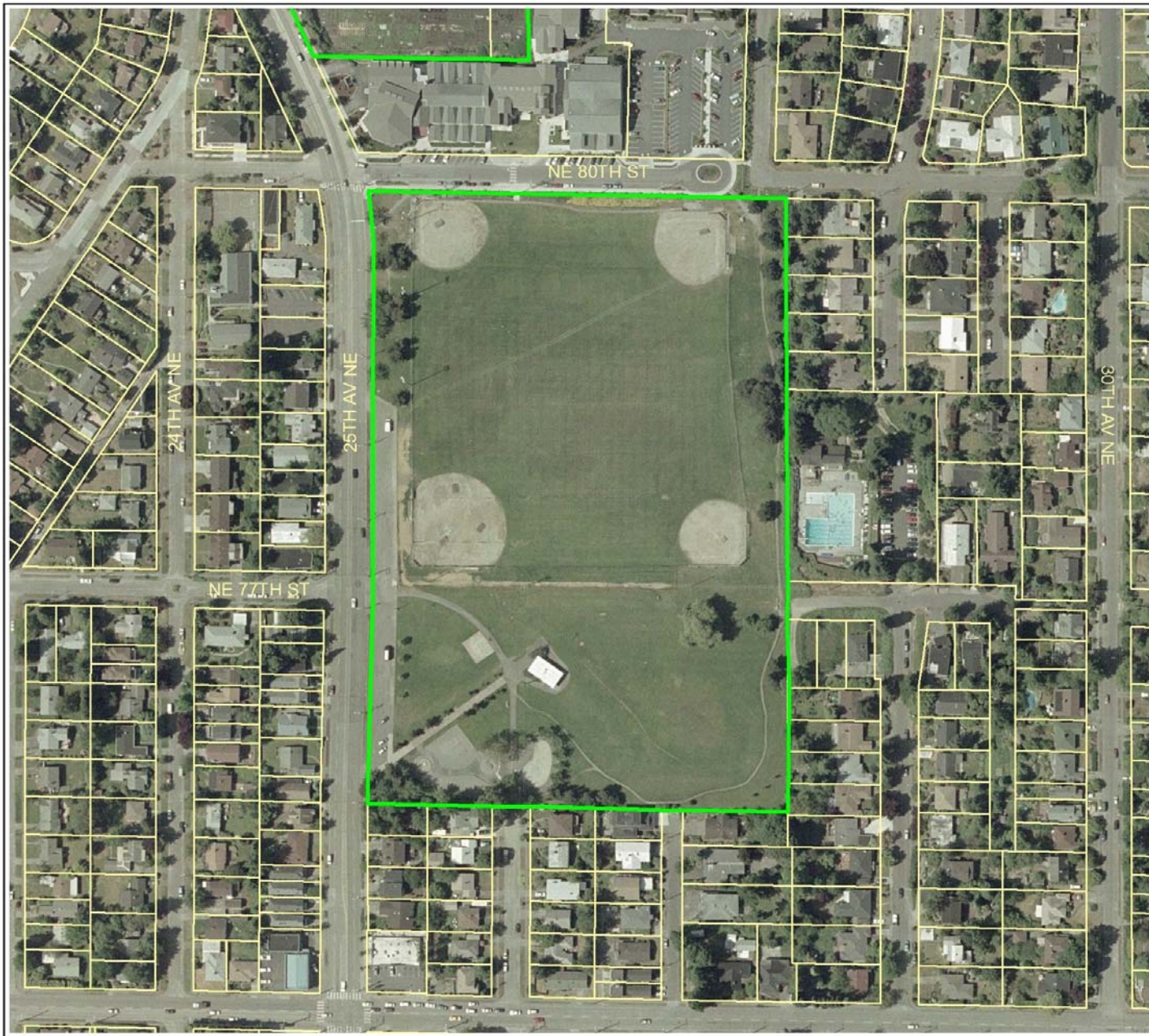


CITY OF VANCOUVER
SKATE SPOTS CONCEPT

CONCEPT #1
"THE TACO"



Attachment 2: Existing Site



Attachment 3: Schematic Design



SiteWorkshop LLC

Improvement Plan for DAHL PLAYFIELD



February 2005



Concept

Two primary elements form the basis of the concept design: bogs and glacial erratics. Both are by-products of the glacial retreat that occurred some 14,500 years ago in the Puget Sound Basin. The concept proposes to restore a portion of the underlying bog with wetland plantings to enhance the natural qualities of the park and provide a pleasant seating / viewing area. A boulder and rock lined corridor will link a new play area to the restored bog, providing an important drainage function while also acting as an unstructured play element. Other proposed improvements include a climbing rock, basketball court, site furnishings, paths, an ADA ramp into the wading pool, and cosmetic upgrades to the community / restroom building.

Legend

Playground Improvements 1 Existing Swings 2 New Playground with Sand Area 3 Climbing Rock 4 Wading Pool Improvements 5 New Basketball Court 6 Picnic Area (old BB court) 7 Bog and Drain Corridor 8 Grass Area (old playground) 9 Restroom Building Improvements 10 Entry/Parking Lot Planting	Playfield Improvements 11 Perimeter Path 12 Ballfield Improvements 13 New Willow Tree Future Improvements 14 Future Parking Lot / 28th Ave Improvements
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Playground Illustration



Aerial Photo



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Attachment 4: Potential Skatespot Locations

